

Celebrating Progress: Recent Successes in the U.S.-Nigeria Partnership

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A recent series of engagements between the United States and Nigeria highlights the value of partnership between the world's two most populous presidential democracies. Deputy Secretary Kurt Campbell and Nigerian Foreign Minister Yusuf M. Tuggar have made progress on implementing mutual economic, governance, and security priorities through the April 29-30 U.S.-Nigeria Binational Commission in Abuja, the 16th U.S.-Africa Business Summit from May 6-9 in Dallas, Texas, and Foreign Minister Tuggar's May 14-17 visit to Washington.

- **Digital transformation** exemplifies the enormous potential derived from U.S.-Nigeria government, business, and people-to-people relationships. The United States is partnering closely with Nigeria to develop and implement a joint action plan to accelerate Nigeria's digital transformation.
- This plan, part of President Biden's Digital Transformation with Africa initiative, aims to facilitate greater investments in Nigeria's digital infrastructure and human capital. An example is Nigeria's positioning to become the first African nation to join the Global Cross-Border Data Privacy Rules Forum, representing another sign of Nigeria's readiness to embrace digital business on a global scale. The Department of State plans to host a U.S. government-funded artificial intelligence conference in Lagos and a technology conference in Washington later this year.
- In the **aviation sector**, the U.S.-Nigeria Open Skies Air Transport Agreement entered into force on May 13. This bilateral agreement establishes a modern, business-friendly civil aviation relationship with commitments to high standards of aviation safety and security.
- In the **cultural sector**, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Lee Satterfield announced three new exchange programs for the creative industries during her March visit to Nigeria. Furthermore, the launch of Nigeria's first Cultural Property Agreement Implementation Grant at the National Museum in Lagos underscores the U.S. government's commitment to protecting and preserving Nigeria's cultural heritage.
- Reinforcing messages and intentions from the 2022 U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, State's Office of **Intellectual Property Enforcement** continued its Creative Industries Ecosystem Roundtable Series in November 2023 in Lagos. Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs Ramin Toloui led roundtable discussions and held meetings with stakeholders, advocating for a strong legal framework for creative and innovative entrepreneurs to compete globally. Assistant Secretary Toloui also delivered keynote remarks on Intellectual Property Day at the 2023 Africa Creative Market Conference, where he highlighted the importance of strong intellectual property protection and enforcement as foundational steps to catalyze the growth of Nigeria's creative and tech sectors.
- The U.S.-Nigeria partnership also benefits from **diaspora engagement**, a feature of President Bola Tinubu's "4-D" – Democracy, Development, Demography and Diaspora – foreign policy. With more than 500,000 Nigerian-born U.S. citizens and legal residents, and 17,000 Nigerian students studying in the United States, our people-to-people ties are vital for fostering economic growth and innovation.

- The upcoming visit of the President's Advisory Council on African Diaspora Engagement in the United States to Nigeria in July further underscores our commitment to strengthening these ties and unlocking opportunities for shared economic prosperity. Diaspora Nigerians in the United States contribute at least \$20 billion annually in remittances to Nigeria, stimulating local economies and fostering entrepreneurial pursuits. In 2023, the United States and Nigeria reciprocally increased tourist visa validity to five years, helping to support a closer, deeper U.S.-Nigeria relationship.

These initiatives reflect the commitment of the United States to deepen ties with Nigeria in support of inclusive economic growth and shared prosperity. The U.S.-Nigeria partnership continues to thrive, built on shared interests, values, and strong people-to-people ties.